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25 September 1990

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Marion Kelly  
FROM: Iris M. Wiley *Iris*  
SUBJECT: Manuscript by Carol Wyban

Enclosed is Carol Wyban's manuscript, "From Tide, Current, and Flow: The Ancient Fishponds of Hawai'i." We appreciate your willingness to evaluate the work for the Press. The instructions to the reader are to give you an idea of what kind of information is most useful to our editorial board.

Please indicate on the invoice form provided your preference for a cash honorarium of \$50 or double that amount in UH Press books. The books may be selected from the enclosed catalogs.

Call me (68694) when you complete your report and I will send a messenger for the manuscript. If you are able to give me an oral preliminary report within two weeks, we can wait an additional week or so to receive your written report.

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## TO THE READER

Please be completely frank. Your identity will not be revealed to the author of this work without your permission. When reading the manuscript, please do not mark the pages. Notes and queries should be confined to separate sheets and appended to your report.

Please consider the following questions when framing your comments:

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5. What is the audience for the work? Would it be of interest to readers other than the primary audience?
6. Is the writing style clear and readable? Does it fit the intended audience?
7. Is the content effectively organized? Is the manuscript the right length for its purpose?
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Thank you for giving us your advice. Please return the manuscript by registered airmail or United Parcel Service, and indicate on the reader's invoice the amount spent for postage.

Wyban, Carol Araki

Ms. From Tide, Current and Flow: The Ancient Fishponds of Hawai'i.

Review:

The author has summarized a considerable amount of information about Hawaiian fishponds in general and about Loko Ea in particular. Hawaiian cultural values are sympathetically presented as having promoted environmentally sensitive aquaculture management techniques that resulted in bountiful harvests of fresh fish protein for human consumption.

The manuscript seems to be divided into four basic categories:

Part I (Sections 1-5). These sections draw heavily on the Hawaiian fishpond as it reflected traditional Hawaiian culture. The author mixes traditional Hawaiian material with modern material. Reorganization of these five sections might help establish a clearer time line than is presently evident. In these sections the author restates many writings of others in a simple, easily read style. Because much of the material presented here is obtained from earlier authors, quoted directly or paraphrased, there needs to be more attention given to providing the reader with the sources from which specific information mentioned has been taken. It is not enough merely to list sources in the bibliography.

Part II (Section 6): This section deals primarily with the author's experiences at Loko Ea. In addition, there is a description of the life-cycle of mullet that has been obtained from the research of others who should have their original works acknowledged.

Part III (Section 7): This section discusses the future of the Hawaiian fishpond and makes the point about the need for making a profit being "the bottom line." It would seem to me that the author should point out in what ways the motivation for building and maintaining a fishpond in Hawaiian times contrasts with the primary motivation today. Here is a chance to point to the differences between the value systems of the Hawaiian subsistence economy and our modern Western market economy. Instead, the author states that adapting Hawaiian fishponds to commercial operations that require a profit "does not move against traditional Hawaiian values" (Wyban, Sec. 7:2). Another difference that should be called to the attention of the modern fishpond keeper is that Hawaiian society was essentially a community-based society in which everyone contributed labor to the construction and maintenance of large projects, such as fishponds. In our modern society, reliable labor must be paid, the cost of which decreases any profits derived. This is an important difference when the success of a modern fishpond enterprise is dependent on making a profit. In a how-to - do-it text such as this, the would-be modern fishpond keeper needs to be alerted to the important differences as well as provided encouragement from the mutually rewarding aspect of "caring for life" (Ibid). Because this section is primarily a how-to section (pp. 1-8), and would have only passing

interest to most readers, who do not aspire to be fishpond keepers, it might be well to put these pages in an appendix.

Part IV (Section 8): Glossary. This is certainly an appendix.

One of the highlights of Hawaiian fishponds I have found compelling is the fact that Hawaiians selected the herbivore link in the food chain to cultivate in their ponds. In the natural food chain 10,000 lbs. of algae ends up producing 1 pound of human flesh. Using the herbivore link, 10,000 lbs. of algae ends up producing 100 lbs. of human flesh because it goes from algae to the herbivore (mullet or awa) to human beings, thereby skipping two links in the "natural" food chain (Hyatt 1947:278, 256-260). Thus, the Hawaiian technique of producing protein for human consumption is 100 times more efficient than the protein produced for human consumption through the "natural" food chain (Ibid.). That they did this by enhancing a portion of the reef, or a natural coastal pond with nutrients and controlled salinity through a system of sluice gates that could be opened and closed according to the changing tides, is a masterful, environmentally sound engineering project, to say the least (Kelly 1989:83-87).

The manuscript needs heavy editing, especially with the Hawaiian words spelling them, using glottal stops (') and macrons (ˉ) and italicizing them with some apparent consistency.

The most unique and creative material in this manuscript is Wyban's experience running Loko Ea. I would like to see this experience written up in greater detail. I know of no other written material that details the day to day work of running a Hawaiian fishpond. This contribution by Wyban is very special.

The audience will be primarily scholars of Hawaiian culture, perhaps high school juniors and seniors as well as college students who are searching for their "roots," and the general community readers of "things Hawaiian." I don't imagine there will be too many people who are actually planning to run a fishpond themselves, but there may be some. I would guess, because of the nature of this material and its creativity, the manuscript might adapt to the Kolowalu series of the Press.